

Leadership Barometer 194 Your Style Robert T. Whipple, MBA CPTD



People have ways of reacting to conditions, and you need to understand your style. If you are not aware of your style, then you will send ambiguous signals to people you know. There are several instruments that can help you determine your style under various conditions.

This article will highlight some uses and precautions with using common style indicators.

Precautions with using style indicators

The two most famous style instruments are the Meyers Briggs Type Indicator and the DiSC Profile. There are numerous other style indicators, but those are the best-known examples.

In both cases, the instrument will give you a snapshot of how you react to things. However, there is a big precaution when you use them. The analysis is self-administered. It indicates what you believe about yourself. That may or may not square with what other people observe about you.

Style indicators are helpful

I believe that the style indicators are useful in that they provide a starting point for understanding. Knowing how you observe your own actions is helpful. However, the analysis needs to be confirmed in the real world. Before you can say, "I am an ENFJ," you need to confirm something. Are your actions as viewed by other people consistent with that profile?

Understanding individual differences

Styles are also helpful in decoding the differences between people. Suppose I am a high S (Steadiness) on the DiSC Scale. If you are a high D (Dominance), that might be useful information. It will help us understand why we react to things

differently. It will also provide some insights into why we experience conflict in certain situations.

The feedback from the evaluation has specific instructions that will help you. If you know your own style preference and that of the other person, it can help prevent misunderstandings.

You can manage your style

Remember that you can decide consciously to operate outside your normal style. You may have a natural tendency to keep things calm and smooth. In certain circumstances, it may be effective to act with high emotion. Do not become a slave to the analysis that shows your natural style. Experiment with different ways of handling circumstances. Keep track of how things work for you. Just because you live in a certain box on the DiSC Profile, you are not forced to remain there.

Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of: *The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals*, *Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*, and *Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind*. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations.